

TRAINERS-2 Part Blue

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Summary: What happens when Ivan comes back to Pallet? And what's up with him and...May Oak?!...how will the group split apart?..how will they deal?

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PART BLUE

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Ivan Vyne had left Pallet Town three weeks earlier. Now, he was returning to show off his Pok  mon to his brother Ira. Ivan smirked. He had five Pok  mon now. "Charmander, Pichu, Beedrill, Spearow, and Metapod," he told himself, pushing his glasses up on his nose. "Wow, I'm gonna go to Ira's gym and see if I can get a badge!"

It had been two weeks since Ivan had last seen his brother Ira. He had gotten a phone call in Viridian City saying that Ira and Crysta were accepted to start a gym in Pallet Town. Ivan beamed when he heard it. Maybe his brother thought he was a loser, but when it all came down to it, they were the best of friends. At least, in Ivan's eyes.

Ivan wasn't a bad-looking kid. He had his brother's looks, except he wasn't exactly fashionable and his lavender hair stuck out in all directions. However, he was a caring and kind person, and he had potential. He just didn't know it.

Ivan slumped onto the ground in Viridian Forest and called out his Spearow. It was an extremely wild Spearow, didn't have much training,

and Ivan decided the opportunity was perfect to teach it just who was boss.

"Spearow, do you know any attacks?" he asked the unaware Pok  mon.

The Spearow just glared at its trainer and lunged at him.

"Ah! Get off of me!" Ivan pushed the flapping Pok  mon away from him. But it was too late. Spearow dove at its trainer, knocking Ivan off of his feet. "Get off...get off of me..." Ivan sputtered, but the untrained Pok  mon wouldn't listen. It tightened its wings and attacked poor Ivan, who fell to the ground, unconscious. Black swirled around him as he felt he was being plunged into a dark hole...

"Oh my God..."

"Is that..."

"Ivan?"

Gary and May Oak had been walking through the Viridian Forest when they stumbled across the poor boy, in a heap in the middle of the path.

"He's knocked out," queried Gary. May got down on her knees and turned Ivan gently around so that his face was toward her. "There's a deep gash on his forehead," observed May. "We better get some help, split."

Gary rolled his eyes. "Ugh, I hate Ivan..."

May slapped her brother. "Ivan is in trouble, Gary! This is no time to take sides, you jerk." May looked at her watch. "It should be about an hour till sundown. Go get some help, and I'll stay here."

Gary nodded. "All right, May. I'll go tell Ira, too." Gary took off on a mad sprint down the winding pathway.

"Poor Ivan." May Oak had a kind heart and good intentions, and even when the others tormented Ivan, she was often on his side. Ivan groaned, and then sputtered. "Ivan! Ivan, can you hear me?"

Ivan blinked his eyes, aware of a beautiful girl sitting next to him. His eyes blurred over, missing their broken and tossed glasses. "Who are you?" he sputtered, in barely a whisper.

"Don't talk right now, okay, Ivan? Go back to sleep." May slipped off her jacket. "Here you go, go to sleep, Ivan." She set the jacket over him as the winds grew colder, and night fell. Gary wasn't back yet. May and Gary had been on a walk, searching for Pok  mon while their best friends Ira and Crysta finished their gym, and added finishing touches.

Ivan was unaware of any of this. He could barely see this girl, but he knew she was beautiful, and she had the kindest voice he had ever heard. He shut his eyes and fell into a deep sleep.

About an hour after Gary left, May heard the scraping of wheels along the gravel and smelled gasoline. It was an ambulance. May sighed with relief as Gary and a medical worker hopped out of the vehicle.

"Well, he's in pretty bad condition," the medical worker told the Oak siblings, after he examined Ira. "It's a good thing you two got here in time."

May smiled. "Thank you, sir."

"No problem."

"Thanks for helping, Gary," May told her brother.

"It was nothing, May."

~

Ivan woke up in a hospital room. It looked familiar, but the walls were bare and white. The TV was on, baseball. Ivan blinked his large green eyes. He couldn't really see, he didn't have his glasses, and his lavender hair stuck up in all directions.

"Oww," he groaned, rubbing his head. There was a gnash there earlier, he knew it, he could feel it. It was replaced by a large bandage.

"Ivan!"

Ivan recognized the voice. It was his brother Ira.

"Ivan, what happened?"

"Hey, Ira..." Ivan brought his voice to a hoarse whisper. "Where's..the girl?"

Ira blinked his eyes. "What're you talking about? What girl?"

"There..was a beautiful girl...she helped me...she was an angel..." Ivan closed his eyes, but didn't fall asleep.

Ira looked confused. "That was no angel. It was just May."

Ivan opened his eyes wide. "May Oak?!" he choked.

"Yeah, her and Gary were walking down through the Viridian Forest when they saw you knocked unconscious, man. May stayed with you and Gary ran for help." Ira examined his brother. "You know, man, you should lose the glasses more often-"

"I can't believe May helped me like that," Ivan said in awe. "She's...some angel..."

"Some angel? Are you going crazy?" Ira rolled his eyes. "Anyway, look at you, man! You look like me, almost!...except, of course, I'm the hot one in the fam..." Ira looked back at his brother, who had fallen asleep. Ira rolled his eyes. "See ya, Ivan."

As soon as the door closed behind Ira, it opened again. The "angel" and Crysta entered, giggling. Crysta's Jigglypuff was tucked in her arms.

"Heya, Ivan!" Crysta said.

Ivan opened his eyes. It was blurry again. Except there were two girls. One was the angel. He knew that, he could hear her voice...

"Can you even hear me?" Crysta waved her hand in front of his face, and then gasped and backed away. "Holy shit, where's his glasses? He looks like Ira!"

May grinned. "I know..."

"Are you thinking what I'm thinking?" Crysta asked her best friend, squealing like a little girl.

"Yeah..." May agreed.

"Makeover!" they both cried.

"Oh my God, this is gonna be a masterpiece!" Crysta jumped up and down in joy. "After he gets out of this crummy hospital, he's getting his haircut, and then we'll go shopping!" The girls high-fived each other and screamed in joy. "AUGH!"

Ivan silently smiled to himself. So, I look like Ira, do I?

He couldn't wait to get out of that damn hospital bed.

~

"Uh, girls? I hope you know I can't see a thing..." May and Crysta had linked arms with Ivan and was pulling him downtown Pallet.

"That's why we're here, okay?"

"Um, sure..." Ivan sighed. It was gonna be a long day. After being in the hospital for three days, he wasn't at home watching TV, oh no, he was being dragged to go shopping, an angel on one arm and her best friend on the other.

"Can we please stop at the optometrist just so that I can get fitted for contacts, please?" Ivan begged.

"Hm. I suppose so," May said.

"After we go get your hair cut!" Crysta squealed. "You're gonna look even better than Ira!"

May gave her a look. "So, you're saying that Ira's good-looking, are you Crysta? Hm?"

Crysta blushed. "No..."

The day was bliss for the two girls, and hell for Ivan. He couldn't see a single thing. His vision was so blurry the girls had to hold

onto his arms all day. Okay, so this isn't COMPLETELY hell...Ivan thought to himself with a grin.

Crysta and May dragged him into a barber shop and plopped him in a chair. "Make him debonnair!"

"Give him the Ricky!"

"Lots of hair gel..."

"...and maybe some purple highlights...to go with the lavender."

"Okay, girls, settle down!" the woman behind the chair laughed. "I will make him utterly gorgeous!" Ivan sighed with discontent as she chopped off his messy spikes. Anything for his angel.

Crysta and May watched in interest. This lady was good. In fact, she was a real expert. He was being transformed from some unloved loser to this dashing adorable Pok  mon trainer. They both noticed it. And both girls realized something.

He looks so much like Ira, and he looks so great...Crysta thought to herself, trying to stop thinking what she was. She wasn't exactly saying she liked Ivan, no, but just thinking of Ira being that cute...it gave her goosebumps, and she shook the thoughts away.

Meanwhile, May had something else on her mind. I thought I could never find anyone after Ash broke my heart, maybe Ivan will be it...no, not Ivan. I've known him forever, and he is and always will be...a loser. May sighed of a sad heart. She knew her brother would never accept Ivan. And she loved her brother more than anyone. And still, deep down in her heart, she loved Ash. But there was just something about looking after Ivan for nearly an hour while he was on the verge of death...something. Something was there.

She just couldn't figure it out.

"He's finished!" The hairdresser spun Ivan's chair around and threw off the blanket covering his shoulders.

Both girls gaped. "He's..."

"Gorgeous," May continued, and then blushed, realizing what she just said. Ivan looked closely in the mirror. He wasn't gorgeous, from what he could see. In fact, he really couldn't see anything, he didn't have any form of eyewear and all...

Ivan's lavender hair spiked out on top of his forehead, and the rest was combed forward.

"Wow, Ivan, you're looking hot!" Crysta cried, linking his arm. She paid the hairdresser. "This one's on me, babe!"

May blushed. Crysta could be so embarrassing.

"Now to get you some new clothes..."

~

"Where have those girls been?" Ira wondered, sipping a soda pop and leaning back on Gary's recliner.

"Who cares? We have my house all to ourselves, not to mention an endless supply of munchies and..." Gary looked under his couch. "Now, where did I put those things...ow!" He bumped his head.

"Where are they, man?" Ira got down on his hands and knees and began searching for Gary's dirty magazines. Ira grinned at Gary. "You know, this is really wrong..."

"Yep." Gary grinned.

"So what have we got to lose?"

Just then, the front door opened. Both boys hit their heads on the recliner. "OW!" they shouted. "Who's there?"

Ira and Gary hopped to their feet, rubbing their heads. "Oh, it's just May and Crysta and..." Gary looked confused. "Who's this?" he asked, looking at the kid with them. He nudged his sister. "Hey, May, what have you been up to, huh? Or was it you, Crysta?"

"Oh, come on, Gary, you know who this is," Crysta teased, pushing Ivan forward. At least he could see, now that he had his contact lenses which he was forced into using his credit card for. He not only had his, as the girls called it, "Ricky" haircut, he was wearing the most expensive casual clothing money could buy.

Gary scratched his head. "Um, no I don't."

Ira squinted. "Hey, I think I know you..." Ira's eyes lit up. "Hey, you girls have done fantastic work!"

May beamed. "Thanks, Ira."

"I don't know WHERE you've been all day, but you sure have transformed him."

Gary took a second look. "Wait a minute, is that who I think it is?"

"Yeah, it's me," Ivan answered.

"Dude!" Gary and Ira slapped him a high five.

~

Ira, Crysta, Gary, May, and Ivan decided, since the summer was short, that they'd sleep outside before Gary and Ivan left for their training again. They pitched two tents behind the Oak's house, one for the girls and one for the guys, who had so graciously accepted Ivan into their little "dirty magazine" club after Ivan told them every issue Pamela had ever graced the cover on.

Of course, while the guys were being disgusting pigs and fattening themselves on greasy cheese popcorn, the girls were painting their nails and giving each other magazine article quizzes.

"You know, Crysta, I seriously think that you and Ira belong together," May told her. Crysta gave her an evil look. May shook her head. "No, seriously. You have gotten to be better friends now that you run the Pok  mon gym together, right?"

"Right..."

"And you have to admit, you both-"

"Can we change the subject, please?" Crysta gave her an evil look. "First of all, I have hated Ira since birth. He is my rival, don't you get it? We both have the same dream, I know, but we're both going down different paths, May." Crysta looked at her feet. "He and I have always wanted to travel to the Nirvana Islands to try to discover new Pok  mon, but it'll never work out, because we can't go one day without having some kind of argument."

"All right, Crysta, I can say I believe you," May sighed.

"Seriously?"

"Yes, seriously. It's after three. I'm going to sleep." May snuggled up inside her sleeping bag and listened to the boys' laughter from the other tent.

"Then I will too." Crysta smiled and climbed in her sleeping bag. "Sweet dreams, May."

"You too, Crysta."

However, May wasn't tired. She had too many things on her mind...her brother would be leaving again soon, and she had to help Crysta and Ira finish their gym in the morning, and find some way to be the peacemaker between them, and Ivan would be leaving too...Ivan. May shook her head. He's just a boy, May, a stupid boy like stupid Ash.

Ash had really broken her heart last time. Flirted with her, sent her letters, bought her presents...and then turned around and ran off with that scrawny little Misty.

May sighed. The Ash episode of her life was over. Completely over. He was too young, anyway, by a couple of years, in fact.

Crysta snored next to her, obviously already in a deep sleep. May opened her eyes and blinked, too awake to be tired. She pulled on her slippers and unzipped the door to the tent, very quietly, so that she wouldn't wake Crysta up.

The grass was dewy and the moon was full. The boys had long ago gone to sleep, at least, she thought. Someone sat with his back to her, on the swings that she and Gary used to play on when they were kids.

"Ira? Is that you?"

"Nah, it's Ivan." He kicked the sand under his feet and traced it with his toe, shivering cold.

May sat on the swing next to him. "What's the matter? Can't you sleep, either?"

"Nope." The stars glittered above them, as a knot pulled itself in May's stomach.

Ivan gripped the swing ropes and turned toward May. "You know, May, I never got to thank you for practically saving my life. I still can't believe you stayed with me that whole time..."

"It was only for an hour, Ivan," May said.

"I know, but it still meant a whole lot to me," Ivan said, looking down at his feet. "So, thank you. Thanks for caring."

May smiled. "You're welcome, Ivan."

Both of them sat there, on the swings, under the pale moonlight, both thinking different things. Don't let yourself do this, Ivan, he told himself, shaking his head. You'll have to leave her, you'll have to go on your Pokémon journey...and yet...you can't just leave like that...

May looked at the night sky, a tear starting at the corner of her eye. He'll have to leave you, dumb girl, she told herself. You can't have your heart broken again like you did last time...you just can't...

The tears welled up in May's eyes, and one fell down her cheek. Ivan brushed it away, and then hugged her. May was surprised, but she felt every worry she ever had being lifted away, and she hugged him back, which turned into a long and endearing kiss. Both of them were crying, and spilling their hearts out to each other.

"I'll have to leave you, May..."

"And I'll have to let you go, Ivan," May sobbed, crying into his shoulder.

"I don't want to..."

"And I don't either..."

"Can't you come with me, May?" Ivan pleaded her. "You know Professor Oak would give you a Pokémon license..."

"Oh, Ivan, I can't," May answered. "I have to stay in Pallet, I have to help Crysta and Ira. You know I do."

"Right. Then this-"

"Is it."

"Should we tell anyone?" Ivan asked her.

"No, we can't. It'll just make things harder."

Ivan stood up and looked down at May. She was the only person he'd ever really fell in love with. And vice versa. It would be so hard to say good-bye. Only a month ago they were practically enemies, and May

thought she was in love with Ash. She was wrong, the only one she really was in love with was the person she'd least expected.

And now she'd have to let him go.

~

"Are you sad about Gary leaving tomorrow?" Crysta slurped on her chocolate shake as her and May sat at a table at Bulbasaur's Burger Garden.

"Yeah, I am." May hung her head.

"I've noticed," Crysta replied. "All you've eaten is a few French fries. You don't need to lose any more weight, girl!"

How can I keep this from my best friend? May looked at her hands...her knuckles were white with nervousness. I promised him I wouldn't tell...but how can I keep this from Crysta? May sighed. "Crysta, I can't keep this from you anymore."

Crysta's eyes widened and she dropped her straw. "Keep going..."

"You can't say anything. Forget I even told you. It'll just make it worse." May hung her head. "Do you promise? That you won't say anything?"

"You know you can trust me."

"All right." May looked Crysta straight in the eye. "I'm in love with Ivan."

Crysta's jaw dropped. "You're in love with Ivan?!" she cried. The look of awe turned into a look of joy. "Oh, hallelujia! I knew this would happen! I rock the psychic world!" Crysta squealed.

"Shh!" May cried, shushing Crysta. "You can't say anything."

"Does he know?!"

"Sh! Yes, he does."

Crysta's eyes glazed over. "Oh May, I'm so happy I can barely speak...this is like a really great romance novel!" Crysta clutched her heart dramatically. "But then he's leaving tomorrow...with Gary."

May smiled slightly. "That's the problem."

"Oh, wow," Crysta sighed. "This is like a Shakespearean tragedy."

"You know what else pisses me off," May stated, "that you and the guys always made fun of him before you realized he had potential. I saw it all along, I looked past what he looked like, even as gorgeous as he is now." May's mood shifted dramatically. "You know, Crysta, maybe I won't help you and Ira with your dumb gym. Maybe I'll go with Ivan instead."

Crysta looked devastatingly worried. "Oh, May, I'm so sorry-"

"Shut up, Crysta. I have to think." May stomped out the door of Bulbasaur's as Crysta was left, her mouth gaping open.

"I'll pay for your French fries!" Crysta called after her.

May wasn't going to listen to Gary anymore. Or Crysta. Or Ira. She'd go find Ivan. Maybe she could get a Pok  mon license and follow him on his journey...

No. That wasn't her dream. It wasn't her destination. She couldn't do this.

She'd find Ivan. And she'd confess to the whole world.

Including Gary and Ira.

~

"Ivan! I'm so glad I found you!" May cried.

Ivan had been trying to train his Pok  mon before May came and grabbed onto his arm. "Hey, wait a minute, May, where are you taking me?"

"I can't do this anymore. I hate people. I hate their stupid belief in reputation and image. We're finding Gary and Ira. And we're going to tell them, just to piss 'em off."

"Um, all right..."

May dragged Ivan all the way to Ira's gym, where Gary and Ira were kicking stones and acting bored.

"Hey May, hey Ivan, what's up?" Gary greeted them.

"Gary, Ira, I can't keep this from you anymore, either." May thrust poor Ivan in front of them. "You see him? Sure, you're friends now, but only because of that stupid reputation you try to keep up. But I'm going to tell you this before you can interrupt me." May grabbed Ivan and kissed him, right in front of Gary and Ira, who stood there gaping. "I love him, and I always have. Even when you hated him. I love him despite the fact that he's a 'dirty magazine expert', looks like Ricky Martin, and could kick your ass in Pok  mon training." May was running short of breath. "This has got to stop."

The three boys were stunned. They had never heard May shout out her opinions like that. She was always the quiet, sensible one. Now she was yelling at one of her best friends and her own brother.

"I knew you had guts, May." Gary grinned.

"Thanks."

There was a gauche silence until Ira broke it. "I'm sorry, Ivan, buddy. If there was anyone who shouldn't have been treating you like that, it was me." Ira hung his head. "I feel terrible. You're my own brother."

Ivan looked like he was about to cry. "It doesn't matter anymore, you guys. You're all my friends now, all right?" He looked around at the trio. "I'll put the past behind me, okay?"

"Sure," Gary nodded his head.

"Friends till the end?"

"Right."

The three stood in silence as the sun set in the distance. This was their last night they'd all be together for a long time, and they knew it. "Let's go get Crysta," Gary said, looking at the orange sky. "It'll be awhile before we're all together again."

"Yeah." They all looked at their feet sadly.

"Hey guys!" Crysta came running up the hill toward the gym, out of breath. She looked at May and hugged her. "I'm so sorry, May."

"Me too." May hugged her back. "Best friends, right?"

"Right." It was as simple as that. When real friends argued like that, they could make up in a split second and still remain true to the other.

The sun glowed crimson as it sank into the horizon. "We could all go out to eat."

"Yeah, that's good!" Ira replied. "My treat!"

"Your treat?!" Crysta exclaimed, then added laughingly, "Where are we eating, the gas station?"

"Very funny," Ira rolled his eyes. "No, as a matter of fact, we'll go to that French restaurant down the street. The really expensive one." Ira grinned. "I just happen to have a gift certificate there, good for a hundred bucks."

"Holy shitballs, Zubatman!" Gary laughed. "Who was THAT from?"

"My rich aunt." Ira beckoned for his friends to follow. "Go get dressed, I'll make a reserve." Ira looked happy. "We'll make this one heck of a night."

"Yeah, okay," everyone agreed.

~

May looked at herself in the mirror. Crysta stood next to her, just as admirably. "I love that dress on you, May," Crysta told her. May's dress extended to her knees, and was white, with small spaghetti straps. "You don't think it's overdoing it?" she asked Crysta, adjusting the white glittered headband in her hair.

"Oh, no way," Crysta said. "It's perfect."

"You too, Crys," May complimented. Crysta was decked out in a short, light blue tube dress with silver embroidery, which complemented her red hair and blue eyes. "Thanks for letting me borrow this, May,"

Crysta told her best friend.

"No problem."

"Are you ready to go see the guys?" Crysta rubbed her hands together excitedly. She couldn't wait to go make fun of Ira in his formal attire.

"Yeah!"

The guys were long ready before the two girls were, sitting downstairs and watching TV. "Hey, guys!" May cried from the top of the stairs, twirling her white purse in the air.

"Hey, sister!" Gary cried, and gave her one of those embarrassing affectionate whistles.

"Oh stop it, Gary," May blushed, grabbing onto his and Ivan's hands and leading them out the door. "So, where's our ride, Ira?"

Ira blushed. "Um...we have to walk."

"WHAT?"

"Hey, I got the reservations, didn't I?" Ira scorned. "Is this MY party or something?"

"Yes."

The five walked down the street in the warm end-of-summer air, May linking arms with Gary and Ivan and Ira and Crysta walking uncomfortably behind them as the chatter between the three in front of them ceased to stop.

"So, Crysta..." Ira scratched the back of his head nervously.

Crysta was extremely embarrassed and mad at May for not getting her out of this awkward situation. But, she had to find some way to cope until they all got there. "Nice outfit, Ira," Crysta teased, but only half-heartedly. The truth of the matter was that he DID look good. Ira had on a plain short-sleeved collared shirt and khakis.

Ira smiled at her.

"Ira..." Crysta started, not knowing how to start. "I-Ira, I just w-wanted to say..." she stammered. "Thanks...for doing this..."

"Don't worry about it, Crysta, we're friends, right?"

"Now we are." The gym had brought the two to not hate each other so much anymore.

"So don't worry. We're just friends."

"Right." Crysta grinned. He just knows the right things to say, she thought to herself as they entered the restaurant. Maybe we're friends after all.

"Reservation?" A man in a tuxedo and a clipboard was standing by the

door.

"Vyne. Party of five," Ira told him. (Pun not intended.)

"Right this way." The host escorted them to a nicely decorated table, where they were surrounded by other groups and couples dressed in fancy clothing. They were handed menus, which none of them could read...except for May, who ordered the "escargot".

"Wuzzat, May?" Gary asked her.

"Snails."

"Ugh." Gary looked at his menu, and then up at the waiter taking their orders. "I'll, um, have some cheese soufflÃ©."

"How boring," May scorned.

"Me too," chimed in Ira and Crysta.

"Do you still serve quiche this late?" Ivan asked, and the waiter nodded. "Okay, I'll have some quiche."

The waiter mumbled some words in French and shuffled to the kitchen. "Wow, this place is cool," Ivan commented.

"Yeah, it sure is." Gary looked around. "You know, I've lived in this town all my life, and yet I've never been to this restaurant...after we stuff ourselves, we'll go see a movie."

"This late?" May questioned.

"Yep. Why not? Ivan and I are leaving at noon anyway."

"Sure. I don't see why not." Ira shrugged his shoulders.

"OK. We'll have one heck of a night, then."

And one heck of a night they had. After having one of the best hour and a half conversations they'd ever had...and of course, laughed harder than they ever did, they stuffed themselves till they were ready to puke. Gary even tried May's escargot, which he mentioned, "wasn't bad".

The major accomplishment of the night was getting Ira and Crysta to unveil themselves as "friends", and they even told each other things that they hadn't when they were kids. "Remember that one guy, Jack?" Ira asked her.

"Oh yeah, he was a cutie!" Crysta replied. "Remember when all three of us snuck in that old hermit's stable barn and spray-painted the haystacks?"

Ira laughed. "Don't even go there!"

May, Ivan, and Gary were pleased in their accomplishment and were taking mental notes. "Now all we have to do is get them to admit that like each other as more than friends," May whispered to Ivan.

"Yeah, that shouldn't be easy, though." Ivan rolled his eyes and

grinned at May.

Ira and Crysta set down their forks when they realized they were being watched. "Okay, what's going on here?" Ira asked them.

"Absolutely nothing," Gary said, trying to act innocent.

"Yeah right."

"Honestly!"

After Ira so generously paid the bill with his aunt's gift certificate, they argued on movies until they all agreed on Bruce Willis. All except for Crysta. "I wanna see the new Julia Roberts!" she complained.

"Julia Roberts is a skank," Ira argued. "All her movies are cheesy."

"Are not!"

"Are too!"

"Will you both shut up?" Gary told them. "Julia Roberts IS a skank, and that's why we're seeing Bruce Willis."

Crysta sighed. "Whatever." Julia, rescue me from the exploding asteroids, she prayed silently to herself.

They sat themselves down near the back of the crowded theater, looking out of place in their formal wear. May sat between Ivan and Gary, and so that left Crysta and Ira. Sitting next to each other. Again.

"I'm, um, going to go get some popcorn," Ira said.

"I'll come with you." Gary hopped out of his seat and followed Ira out of the door, looking at his watch. "Good thing Crysta's there with them...we wouldn't want to leave May and Ivan unsupervised," he laughed.

"True."

Gary propped his elbow against the cash register as their candy and popcorn was being paid for. "I'm doing you a favor, you know," he told Ira.

"What?"

"I should be given the credit when you and Crysta get together," he told his best friend. "I was the one who thought of it."

"You're crazy, man." Ira grabbed his confections and stumbled back into the movie theater.

"Oh no I'm not..." Gary whispered.

Ira ignored him. "Hey, Crysta, you want some popcorn?" he asked her, as the previews were running.

"Oh, sure, thanks."

Ira looked at Gary, who had his thumb up. Ira blushed. "Do ya mind if I, ah, have some?"

"You're the one that paid for it, duh," Crysta laughed. "Eat as much as you want."

"Thanks."

Meanwhile, three feet away, Ivan and May were having their own problems. "This is my armrest!" May whispered loudly. "If you want an armrest, use the one next to you!" She jabbed Ivan in the elbow.

"Ouch!" Ivan rubbed his slightly bruised elbow. "You can use me as an armrest, May, darling...ouch!" May had hit him again. "If you don't shut up, Ivan, we'll be kicked out of the theater!"

"Hey!" Gary whispered. "I have half a mind to go sit somewhere else. Now shut up and enjoy the movie!"

May rolled her eyes and slunk back in her chair. Her and Ivan, she realized, were acting like...a couple. It was disgusting, actually, they'd only been "together" for a little over two days...and they had grown mentally attached.

It was sick. Really sick.

The truth was, May and Ivan couldn't be separated for about two minutes. It was like they were...soul mates, or something like that. Everyone else noticed it, too. They also noticed that when one did something, the other followed.

And it had only been two measly days.

"I'm sorry, Ivan," she apologized.

"That's okay," he replied.

And the arguing ceased for the rest of the movie...that is, unless you count Ira spilling popcorn all over Crysta...unintentionally, of course.

~

The next day was a beautiful one. The winds were fast and the sun was hot, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. The fivesome stood, crowded around each other, trying to remember the moment so that it would last forever. Ira was desperately trying to be a man, and not let a tear slip down his cheek; Gary refused to look anyone in the eye; poor May was bawling her eyes out; Crysta was squeezing Ivan and Gary so tightly they could barely breathe; and Ivan was shouting out promises to May over the sobs.

"I promise to call you every day...I promise I'll write...I'm coming back in two months..." he kept rambling. "Of course I won't get another girl...I promise..."

May was in the worst condition of the five. She was losing her soulmate and her brother in one day.

It was so unfair.

Ira couldn't bear it anymore. Tears streaming down his cheeks, he hugged his brother and his best friend...who were both leaving him.

"Gary, do me a favor?" Ira asked.

"Anything, man."

"Kick Ash's ass in the PokÃ©mon League for me, okay?"

"Can do."

And with the last tears and hugs on that beautiful Pallet Town morning, Ivan and Gary slung their backpacks over their shoulders and headed towards Viridian City, both going different directions.

May, Ira, and Crysta watched the last moments as the dust kicked behind the two boys and they became part of the horizon.

"Wow," Crysta stated under her breath, her eyes drying from tears. "I guess it's just us now, huh?"

"It will be...for a long time," Ira told her.

"I lost my brother and the love of my life in one day!" May sobbed melodramatically.

"They'll be back," Ira said, patting her on the back and smiling through his tears. "Just you wait, May. They'll be back."

The sun rose on the highest peak of the forest, casting a midday shadow as the three remaining Pallet Town residents turned their heels and headed home.

~

End
file.